

A D I A L O G U E **Between a Blind-Man and Death.**

Blind-Man.

THe more men see, the less they do enquire ;
 The worse they see, the more they do desire
 Others to grant what Blindness cannot give,
 And for Intelligence grow inquisitive.
 They ask to be inform'd, who cannot see ;
 I know't by sad experience, 'Tis me !

Death.

Where are you, Sir ? What sitting all alone ?
 I did suppose 'twas you by that sad moan :
 Coming this way to gather what's my due,
 I thought it not amiss, to call on you.

Blind-Man.

I do not know that voice ; 'tis sure some Stranger ;
 And by his words, he seems to bode me danger.

Death.

You guess aright, Sir ; and before I go,
 I'll make you know me, whether you will or no.

Blind-Man.

Why what are you ? Pray tell me what's your Name,
 And what's your business, and from whence you came.

Death.

I will declare what no man can deny,
 There's none so great a Traveller as I :
 Yet you must know, I am no wandering Rover,
 For my Dominion lies the World all over ;
 I march through Court and Country, Town and City,
 I know not how to fear, nor how to pity.
 The highest Cedar, and the lowest Flower,
 Sooner or later do both feel my Power :
 The mightiest Emperor doth submit to me,
 Nor is the poorest tatter'd Beggar free ;
 In Peace, I glean here one, and there another ;
 Sometimes I sweep whole streets, both one and t'other.
 I time of War, thus much I can divine ;
 Whoever gets the day, the Triumph's mine.
 I am a potent and a high Commander,
 'Twas I that conquer'd the Great Alexander,
 Though mighty Nations under's foot he trod,
 And had th' Ambition to be thought a God ;
 Yet, after all the Victories he had won,
 I made him know he was but Philip's Son.
 Were you Goliath great, or Sampson strong,
 Were you as wise, as rich as Solomon ;
 Were you as Nestor, Old ; as Infant, Young ;
 Had you the fairest Cheek, the sweetest Tongue ;
 Yet you must stoop, all these will nought avail :
 For my Arrest does not admit of Bail ;
 And to deal plainly, Sir, my name is Death,
 And 'tis my business to demand your Breath.

Blind-Man.

My Breath and Life shall both go out together,

Death.

And on that Errand 'twas, that I came hither :
 I'll have both Breath and Life without delay :
 You must and shall dispatch ; come, come, away.

Blind-Man.

What need such Posting haste ? Pray Change your mind ;
 'Tis a poor Conquest to surprise the Blind.

Death.

You may not call it *Posting*, nor *Surprise* ;
 For you had warning when you lost your Eyes.
 Nor could you hope your House could long be free,
 After the Windows were possess'd by me.

Blind-Man.

But Life is sweet ; and who'd not, if he might,
 Have a long day, before he bid good Night ?
 O spare me yet awhile ! slight not my Tears.

Death.

Hard Hearts and hungry Bellies have no Ears.

Blind-Man.

I am not yet quite ready for the Table.

Death.

All's one to me ; I am inexorable.

Blind-Man.

Yet, by your favour, I may step aside.

Death.

Be not deceiv'd, for 'tis in vain to hide :
 My forces are dispersed through all places ;
 And act for me without respect of Faces :
 I have a Thousand ways to shorten Life,
 Besides a Rapier, Pistol, Sword, or Knife :
 A Fly, a Hair, a splinter of a Thorn,
 A little Scratch, the cutting of a Corn,
 Have sometimes done my business heretofore,
 So to the full, that I need with no more.

Should all these fail, enough of humours lurk
 Within your Body, Sir, to do my work.

Blind-Man.

Well then, let some one run to my Physician,
 Tell him I want his aid in this Condition.

Death.

Run, Boy, and fetch him ; call th' whole Colledge, do :
 For I intend to have them shortly too.
 I value not their Portions and their Pills,
 Nor all the Cordials in the Doctors Bills :
 When my time's come, let them do what they can,
 I'll have my due, so vain a thing is man.
 Should *Galen* and *Hippocrates* both joyn,
 And *Paracelsus* too, with them Combine,
 Let them all meet to Countermand my strength
 Yet shall they be my Prisoners at length.
 I grant that Men of Learning, Worth and Art,
 May have the better of me at the Start ;
 But in long Running they'll give out and tire,
 And quit the field, and leave me my desire.
 As for those Quacks, that threaten to cure me,
 They are my Friends ; and speed some Patients to me.

Blind-Man.

Well, if I must, I'll yield to you the day
 'Tis so Enacted, and I must Obey :
 Henceforth I count my self among you
 For 'tis, I see, the measure of my Better
 But tell me now, when did your Power

Death.

My Power began from Adam's first Offence.

Blind-Man.

From Adam's first Offence ! O base beginning !
 Whose very first Original was Sinning.

Death.

My Rising did from Adam's Fall begin ;
 And ever since, my strength and sling's from Sin.

Blind-Man.

To know wherein the Enemies strength doth lie,
 In my Conceit is half a Victory :
 Have you Commission now for what you do ?

Death.

I have Commission : what's all this to you ?

Blind-Man.

Yes very much ; for now I understand
 I am not totally at your command :
 My Life's at his who gave you this Commission ;
 To him I'll therefore make with my Petition :
 I'll Seek his Love, and on his Mercy trust ;
 And when my Sins are pardon'd, do your worst.

Death.

That you may know how far my Power extends
 I will divorce you from your dearest Friends
 You shall resign your Jewels, Money, Plate :
 Your Earthly Joys shall all be out of date.
 I will deprive you of your dainty fare ;
 I'll strip you to the skin, naked and bare.
 Linnen or Woolen you shall have to wind y'
 As for the rest, all must be left behind y'
 Bound hand and foot, I'll bring you to my Door,
 Where constant dreadful Darkness reigns, and then
 Your only Dwelling-house shall be a Cave ;
 Your Lodging-Room, a little narrow Grave ;
 A Chest, your Closet ; and a Sheet, your Dress ;
 And your Companions, Worms and Rottensness.

Blind-Man.

If this be all the mischief you can do,
 Your Harbingers deserve more dread than you.
 Diseases are your Harbingers, I'm sure ;
 Many of which, 'tis grievous to endure ;
 But when once dead, I shall not then Complain
 Of Cold, or Hunger, Poverty or Pain.

Death.

There's one thing more, which here to mind I call,
 When once I come, then come I once for all :
 And when my stroke doth Soul and Body sever,
 What's left undone, must be undone for ever !

Blind-Man.

That's a great Truth, and I have learnt to know
 That there's no working in the Grave below.
 To be before hand therefore I will try,
 That then I may have nought to do but dye.
 But tell me, Sir, do all men dye alike ?

Death.

To me they do ; for whom God bids, I strike :
 Look how the Foolish dye, so dye the Wise ;
 As do the Righteous, so the Sinner dyes.

There's afterwards a difference, though, 'tis true ;
 But that's a thing with which I've nought to do.
 That I to some prove better, to some worse ;
 To some a Blessing, and to some a Curse ;
 That's none of mine ; I may not undertake it ;
 'Tis Gods appointment, and mens works, that make it.
 Hence 'tis that Sinners Troubles never cease,
 And that the End of th' Upright Man is peace.

Blind-Man.

There now remains but only one thing more ;
 Will not thy pow'r be one day out of door ?

Death.

Yes, I must needs confess 'tis very true ;
 There is a Death for Me, as well as You ;
 And mine's the worst, for I must die for ever ;
 You may revive again, but I shall never.

Blind-Man.

By all that hath been said, I now do see,
 You needed not have been so rough with me.

Death.

Come, let that pass ----- The kinder to appear,
 I will reveal a secret in your Ear.
 The Death of Christ upon the painful Cross,
 Which seem'd to be my Gain, turn'd to my Loss.
 As in his Hair, the strength of *Sampson* lay,
 And with his Hair, went *Sampson's* strength away.
 So I've no strength, but what I had from Sin ;
 Nor have I Sting, but what lies hid therein :
 Christ Suffering Death, to put this sling away,
 Hath made me his, whom I suppos'd my Prey.
 My Strength is now decay'd, my Sting rebated :
 My Boldness Check'd, and my Dominion mated ;
 And I am now both faint and feeble grown,
 Much like poor *Sampson*, when his strength was gone :
 In my own Craft I was Completely routed,
 My Jaws are broken, and my Holders outed.
 What now I catch, I have no pow'r to keep ;
 My very Name is chang'd, from Death to Sleep :
 I seiz'd on Christ indeed, that I did do ;
 Nay more, I bound him in my Prison too ;
 But all my strongest Doors, Bars, Bolts, and Bands,
 Were but meer Nothing in his mighty Hands :
 He broke them all, and left my doors wide open,
 And all his Servants Prisoners of Hope :
 For though they dye, yet with devout Affection,
 They do expect a joyfull Resurrection ;
 And with their Master to be brought again,
 That they with him for ever may Remain.
 Thus Christ by dying, did become Victorious :
 And from his Bed of Darkness rose more glorious :
 And I by Binding Him, made my self fast ;
 And His, I know will prove my Death at last.

Blind-Man.

These words give Comfort and Instruction too ;
 Henceforth I shall be better pleas'd with you.
 Decreed it is for all men once to dye ;
 After that Judgment, then Eternity.
 To Prayer therefore will I joyn Endeavour,
 So to live here, that I may live for Ever.
 And seeing they that have, and keep Christs words,
 Whether they live or dye, be all the Lords ;
 Repentance, Faith, and New Obedience shall
 Fit and prepare me for my Funeral.
 From whence I trust, my Saviour will translate me,
 In Season due, beyond their reach that hate me ;
 Even to that place of Life and Glory too,
 Where neither Death, nor Sin, hath ought to do.
 This hope in me, that Word of his doth cherish,
He that believes in Me, shall never perish.
 Now welcome Death, upon my Saviours Score !
 Who would not dye, to live for Evermore ?

Death.

Sir, I perceive you speak not without Reason :
 I'll leave you now, and call some other Season.

Blind-Man.

Call when you please, I will await that Call ;
 And while I stand make ready for my Fall !
 In the meantime, my constant Prayer shall be,
 From Sudden and from Endless Death, Good Lord deliver me.

The Conclusion.

Judge not of Death by Sense, lest you mistake it ;
 Death's neither Friend nor Foe, but as you make it.
 Live as you should, you need not then Complain ;
 For where to Live, is Christ ; so Dye, is Gain.

F I N I S.

L I C E N S E D, According to Order.